

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TEGUCI 03830 01 OF 02 092025Z

64

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15 USIA-15

ACDA-19 IO-15 AID-20 PC-04 OMB-01 DRC-01 /152 W

----- 055379

R 091955Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5432

INFO AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

USCINCSO

DIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 TEGUCIGALPA 3830

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652:

TAGS: MARR MILI HO

SUBJECT: RETIREMENTS AND PROMOTIONS WITHIN HONDURAN
ARMED FORCES

1. SUMMARY. HONDURAN ARMED FORCES DAY, OCT 3, SERVED AS OCCASION FOR MANY MILITARY PROMOTIONS AND RETIREMENTS, AND FOR GEN LOPEZ' REITERATION OF NEED FOR ARMED FORCES TO CONTINUE TO SERVE AS "AXIS OF PUBLIC LIFE." END SUMMARY.

2. ARMED FORCES DAY WAS CELEBRATED WITH DUE CEREMONY AT FIRST BATTALION HEADQUARTERS NEAR TEGUS. ABOUT 3800 TROOPS PARTICIPATED, GENERAL LOPEZ HAVING EARLIER DISAPPROVED A PROPOSED 9000 TROOP CEREMONY AS TOO EXPENSIVE AND SUBJECT TO MISINTERPRETATION WHILE PEACE TALKS WITH SALVADOR ARE UNDERWAY.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 TEGUCI 03830 01 OF 02 092025Z

3. GEN LOPEZ GAVE SHORT BUT PITHY SPEECH IN WHICH HE

ANNOUNCED THAT ARMED FORCES WOULD CONTINUE TO BE "AXIS OR POINT OF EQUILIBRIUM OF PUBLIC LIFE." HE PRAISED GROWING PROFESSIONALIZATION OF ARMED FORCES AND SAID THEIR CORRECTION OF MANY "ANOMALIES" CARRIED OUT BY "TRADITIONAL FORCES" OF GOVERNMENT GUARANTEED THAT "FOR MANY YEARS THERE WILL CONTINUE TO EXIST A DIRECT RELATION BETWEEN THE EFFICIENT FUNCTIONING OF THE ARMED FORCES AND THE GOOD PROGRESS OF THE GENERAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE COUNTRY." HE WENT ON TO DEFINE DIRECTION OF THE STATE BY THE ARMED FORCES AS NEW LINE CHOSEN BY HONDURAN PEOPLE TO ACHIEVE ITS OBJECTIVES FOR IMPROVEMENT OF LIFE. STATEMENT WAS STRONG REPUDIATION OF HOPES OF TRADITIONAL PARTIES TO RETURN SOON TO ANY PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT.

4. DAY BROUGHT ABOUT LONG-AWAITED (BUT STILL INCOMPLETE) LIST OF RETIREMENTS. FIFTY-EIGHT OFFICERS WERE RETIRED FROM GRADES OF LIEUTENANT THROUGH COLONEL. ALMOST ALL THESE WERE RETIRED FOR UNSATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE, INCLUDING PHYSICAL DISABILITY, ALCOHOLISM, BAD CONDUCT (E.G. NOTORIOUS COL PADILLA, EX-ZONE COMMANDER OF OLANCHO) OR PAST POLITICAL ACTIVITIES. MOST ARE UNKNOWN, WITHOUT CURRENT ASSIGNMENTS BUT STILL ON PAYROLL. GENERAL STAFF HAS SPENT SEVERAL MONTHS IDENTIFYING THESE OFFICERS, AND PROCESS REPORTEDLY GENERATED SERIOUS TENSIONS HERE AND THERE WITHIN MILITARY.

5. THESE ARE DE FACTO RETIREMENTS PRIOR TO SIGNATURE OF FORMAL MILITARY RETIREMENT STATUTE, WHICH HAS BEEN PERIODICALLY PREDICTED FOR SEVERAL MONTHS. IT IS NOW EXPECTED FOR LATE OCTOBER, AT WHICH TIME WE ARE TOLD THAT MIN OF DEFENSE COL GALO SOTO AND TWO OTHER SENIOR COLONELS IN DEFENSE MINISTRY WILL RETIRE. RUMORS STILL PERSIST THAT AIR FORCE COMMANDER COL SOTO CANO WILL ALSO THEN RETIRE, BUT WE ARE SKEPTICAL. BEST BET FOR NEW DEFENSE MIN CONTINUES TO BE FIRST ZONE COMMANDER COL RAMIREZ LANDA.

6. SOME FIFTY OFFICERS WERE PROMOTED TO AND WITHIN FIELD
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 TEGUCI 03830 01 OF 02 092025Z

GRADES. TWO NEW FULL COLONELS ARE THIRD ZONE COMMANDER ABRAHAM GARCIA TURCIOS AND FOURTH ZONE COMMANDER OMAR ZELAYA. TWENTY-EIGHT PROMOTIONS TO LT COLONEL INCLUDED FIVE IN AIR FORCE AND THREE IN CES. PROMOTIONS TO LT COLONEL INDICATE NORMAL PROGRESSION WITHIN OFFICER RANKS, BUT WITH EMPHASIS ON BRIGHT AND OUTSTANDING YOUNGER OFFICERS, MOST OF WHOM BY NOW HAVE COMMAND AND GENERAL STAFF COLLEGE LEVEL TRAINING.

7. PROMOTION TO LT COLONEL WILL PRESUMABLY CAUSE SOME
RESHUFFLE OF ASSIGNMENTS, ALTHOUGH OFTEN THEY MERELY
ELEVATE OUTSTANDING MAJORS TO POSITION LEVEL AT WHICH
THEY ARE NOW FUNCTIONING. THUS GENERAL STAFF HAS BEEN
UPGRADED, WITH THREE OF ITS FOUR
PRINCIPAL OFFICERS BENEATH COL HERNANDEZ NOW LT COLONELS.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TEGUCI 03830 02 OF 02 092031Z

64

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15 USIA-15

ACDA-19 IO-15 AID-20 PC-04 OMB-01 DRC-01 /152 W

----- 055394

R 091955Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5433

INFO AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

USCINCSO

DIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 TEGUCIGALPA 3830

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

8. PERSONNEL ACTIONS GIVE PICTURE OF REGULARITY AND
ORDERLY PROCESS. TWO NEW INFANTRY COLONELS AND SIX OR SEVEN
OF NEW LT COLONELS ARE NOTABLE LOPEZ LOYALISTS, AND
GENERALLY SPEAKING ENTIRE WAVE OF PROMOTIONS FOR MAJORS
REFLECT LOPEZ POST-1969 POLICY OF EASING OUT UNPRODUCTIVE
AND UNEDUCATED OLDER OFFICERS ("EMPIRICOS") IN FAVOR
OF LOWER GRADE COMERS. THIS IS NOT TO SAY PROMOTIONS
ARE BY LOPEZ FIAT ALONE, SINCE THEY CLOSELY ADHERE TO
NORMAL SEQUENCE AND CRITERIA AND WERE DECIDED BY MEETING
OF SUPERIOR DEFENSE COUNCIL LAST WEEK AT WHICH THERE
WAS APPARENTLY CONSIDERABLE PUSHING AND PULLING. SUCH

SESSIONS ARE NOT UNUSUAL RE DECORATIONS AND PROMOTIONS.
(THERE ARE NO INDICATIONS THE COUNCIL DELIBERATED ON
GOVERNMENT POLICY, AS IT DID LAST MAY.) THE GIVEN
EVENTS, AND INDEED LOPEZ' RECENT PERSONAL AND OFFICIAL
REGIME, GIVE A STRONG IMPRESSION OF HIS CONTINUED
EFFECTIVE CONTROL OF MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT AND OF
LATTER'S COMMITMENT TO CONTINUE GOVERNING HONDURAS.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 TEGUCI 03830 02 OF 02 092031Z

SANCHEZ

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ARMED FORCES, MILITARY PERSONNEL
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 OCT 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973TEGUCI03830
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS SANCHEZ
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: TEGUCIGALPA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731042/aaaabfcl.tel
Line Count: 183
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23-Jan-2002 by martinml>; APPROVED <11 FEB 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RETIREMENTS AND PROMOTIONS WITHIN HONDURAN ARMED FORCES
TAGS: MARR, MILI, HO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005